

REPORT REPRINT

Qualys bridges asset and vulnerability management with free asset inventory offering

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The company announced that it would offer its asset inventory cloud application free of charge, a development likely to affect the broader IT asset management market. The move is also likely to ruffle the feathers of emerging asset management players that aggregate information from an organization's existing IT and security resources.

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Introduction

Just ahead of this year's Black Hat conference, Qualys revealed that it was making its Asset Inventory (AI) application free for all of its customers. The change promises to shake up an IT asset management market already undergoing rapid transformation thanks to the growing heterogeneity of IT assets and computing environments complicating enterprise efforts to gain visibility and control over all of their assets.

451 TAKE

While Qualys AI has been in this sector of the market for a little over a year, the decision to offer it for free is a shrewd move that reflects a heightened enterprise need for visibility and control across increasingly diverse IT environments. Since the company generates most of its revenue from its vulnerability scanning, reporting and compliance-related applications, it should easily absorb the AI application's operating cost. The move is also likely to ruffle the feathers of emerging asset management players that aggregate information and functionality from an organization's existing IT and security resources. The value proposition of providing enterprises with similar functionality without the complexity inherent in managing multiple connectors to distinct products should help to strengthen Qualys' position against these vendors.

Details

Qualys AI uses a combination of authenticated, unauthenticated and passive scans to continuously discover, normalize, classify and categorize an enterprise's assets in real time. The company claims that AI can discover all an organization's managed and unmanaged devices (including non-standard IoT devices), on-premises or cloud assets, containers and operational technology.

Offering this functionality as a free service has the potential to create several benefits for both Qualys and its customers. For the end customer, Qualys AI acts as a logical extension of the company's existing capabilities, integrating the real-time inventory into the company's vulnerability scanning, patch management and compliance applications for a more fluid vulnerability and exposure management process. For Qualys, the move has the potential to unlock new revenue while simultaneously strengthening its competitive position. Qualys agents can be installed on recently discovered assets directly through the platform, bringing the full functionality of Qualys' cloud applications with them. Since the company prices its products on a per-application, per-device basis, Qualys AI offers a simple path for organic growth within existing customer deployments.

Competitively, the move may help bolster Qualys' position against vulnerability management vendors like Rapid7 and Tenable by expanding the scope of the platform and offering a single UI through which security practitioners can view assets, conduct scans and manage remediation workflows. It's also a shot across the bow of emerging IT asset management vendors, such as Axonius, Panaseer and LifeOmic's JupiterOne. The majority of these vendors act as aggregators, connecting with an organization's existing IT and security tools (including Qualys) to consolidate asset data, vulnerabilities and workflow automation tools for remediation into a single dashboard. Qualys' ability to provide similar functionality with a simpler deployment model could reduce the marginal value of deploying other asset management tools when an organization already has Qualys agents installed.